BIG LAKE PLANNING COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

March 30, 2005

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Parsons called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners present: Kirby Becker, Tony Benecke, Doug Hayes, Duane Langsdorf, Melinda Parsons and Scott Marotz. Commissioners absent: None. Also present: Economic Development Director Jim Thares, Economic Development Director, Alex Wickstrom, City Planner Ned Noel, City Attorney Matt Brokl, City Assistant Engineer Jared Voge, City Consultant Planners Alan Brixius and Nate Sparks.

3. NEW COMMISSIONER SCHREIBER OATH

Mr. David Schreiber of 649 Driftwood Circle was officially sworn-in as a Big Lake Planning Commissioner.

4. OPEN FORUM

Chair Parsons opened the Open Forum at 7:02 p.m. No one came forward. Chair Parsons closed the Open Forum at 7:03 p.m.

5. ADOPT AGENDA

Commissioner Benecke moved to adopt the agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Hayes, unanimous ayes, agenda adopted.

6. APPROVE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 16, 2005

Commissioner Langsdorf motioned to approve the March 16, 2005 Meeting Minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Becker, unanimous ayes, Minutes approved.

7. BUSINESS

7A. PUBLIC HEARING: Variance for "17075 Trillium Lane"

Alex Wickstrom presented the variance request filed by Signature Homes, MN Inc. The request was to approve a 1.1 front yard variance for a new home. Specifically, the garage was found to encroach 1.1 into the front yard setback after an inspection. Mr. Wickstrom reviewed that the builder initially did not propose a large enough garage and after the plans were corrected; their block layer did not lay the foundation according to the new dimensions. Thus, City staff believes the variance can be justified based on error of human mistake and that approving the variance would not solely benefit the builder or future home owner.

Commissioner Benecke asked inquired about City review process. City Planner Ned Noel indicated the City process works efficiently but it the problem occurred with the contractor error.

Jeff Schlingman, Signature Homes, MN Inc. stated they called the City after they found the error during their own inspection. They were then directed by City staff to apply for a variance so that the error could be corrected.

Chair Parsons opened the public hearing at 7:10 p.m. No one came forward. Chair Parsons closed the public hearing at 7:11 p.m.

Commissioner Becker motioned to recommend approval of the variance. Seconded by Commissioner Benecke, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

7B. PUBLIC HEARING: Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Rezoning & Preliminary Plat for "Hudson Woods"

Alan Brixius, Northwest Associated Consultants (NAC), presented the staff report. The proposal site is 181 acres located north and west of the intersection of 172ns Street and U.S. Hwy 10. 219 single family homes and 24 commercial lots are being contemplated. Mr. Brixius stated the developer has been working with the City since January of this year to work out transportation issues- such as designing a major collector road through the development. This road would essentially parallel existing U.S. Hwy 10 on as it crossings over the BNSF railroad tracks, have no direct driveway access and lastly provide landscaped berms for residential screening to the east. Also, 166th Street will be vacated at its intersection with U.S. Hwy 10. The proposal identifies a mix of zoning types- B-3, R-1 and R-1E. The smaller R-1 residential lots will be closest to the collector and U.S. Hwy 10. As for the larger estates residential lots or R-1E, they will be farther east located within a large oak wood forest. The master plan calls for a

recreational /natural park located more or les in the center of the development. This park would provide playground activities and trails connecting to the oak wood forest. Within the forest are a number of quality wetlands that will be persevered. Mr. Brixius stated the City has required a Tree Preservation Plan so that as many as possible trees will be saved. The developer also realizes the significance and selling point of keeping these trees rather than mass-grading the site. The staff report also indicated additional suggestions to change the preliminary plat. Suggestions included, Street "K" should be extended so no front yards face U.S. Hwy 10, the "Exception" parcel along 205th St. should include a through street, later phased stages should identify a platted easement for collector street, landscaping should be 50 feet back from the intersection of Street A and U.S. Hwy 10, cul-de-sac islands should have landscaping details. Other requirements the report listed, but were not limited too, were to revise the plat to included two 20 foot outlots for trails connections throughout the neighborhood, the developer must work with the County Forester on Tree Preservation and lastly a definitive rear lots custom grading plan shall be submitted with proper snow and silt fencing.

Applicant Jim Brown, Dynamic's Land Design Company, 207 Jefferson Blvd, Big Lake addressed the commission about his company's project. He stated they believe their master plan coordinates and integrates a variety of uses that will make for a successful development. He sees the commercial linear development as a sort of eastern gateway for the City of Big Lake. They have conducted a traffic study for volumes of traffic and proper road connections and feel firm that the proposed collector will take pressure off existing 201st Street. Mr. Brown stated the development will be phased from the commercial side eastward into about the first 1,000 feet of residential. Their Tree Preservation Plan will be implemented by having the builders identify "primary" and "secondary" zones on each lot. These will be demarcated by different color ribbons. The former will be a no build area leaving the trees untouched and the latter zone will be the impacted area with the home site, erosion swales and driveway. Mr. Brown also addressed the suggestions in the staff report and stated they would not like to extend Street "K" nor add any additional park land in Block 9. The park that is proposed will have 7 acres upland, ample for recreational uses and provide over 3,050 feet of trails. He passed out memo to the commissioners showing the proposed trail system.

Commissioner Schreiber had concerns over Oak Wilt within the development and long term road connections to the east (towards the City of Elk River).

Mr. Brown indicated they have identified on the Tree Preservation Plan what areas are specifically affected by Oak Wilt. He said Red Oaks are most affected but the mix of Burr and Whites are more resistant to the disease.

Commissioner Becker had concerns of traffic noise along U.S. Hwy. 10 and the safety/spacing distance from proposed intersection with Street "A" and where U.S. Hwy.

10 starts to curve to the southeast.

Mr. Brown stated there were no objections from MN/Dot or the MNPCA about the proposed intersection or stacking problems. Additionally, there were no objections over traffic noise and if it will negatively affect the proposed homes.

Mr. Brixius, clarified the developer is proposing along U.S. Hwy 10 visual screening and noise buffering with 6 foot tall evergreens on top of a 4-foot berms.

Assistant City Engineer, Jared Voge addressed proposed 168th or Street "A" establishes the proper spacing between intersections MN/Dots prefers over the existing 166th intersection with U.S. Hwy. 10. The portion of 166th Street will be vacated at the current intersection.

Park Advisory Committee comments were disused, specifically the extra park located in Block 9. Commissioner Marotz, liaison to the Park Committee, stated the second park idea was to be generally located in Block 9 and was meant more for a "neighborhood park" as opposed to the larger park located off the collector road.

Mr. Brown was opposed to the idea because the second park will mean cutting down a number of significant trees and the first park is easily accessible by internal trail connections.

Commissioners discussed the length of Street "N" (technically shown on the plat as a "cul-de-sac") and road connections at the southern end of the preliminary plat.

Chair Parsons opened the public hearing on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan Amendment at 8:07 p.m. No one came forward. Chair Parsons closed the public hearing at 8:08 p.m.

Commissioner discussed if the proposed commercial lots were appropriate for "Big Boxes" retail uses. Mr. Brixius stated typically big boxes require about 12-20 acres and a building foot-print of 120,000 to 180,000 square feet.

Commissioner Hayes motioned to recommend approval of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan Amendment. Seconded by Commissioner Marotz, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Chair Parsons opened the public hearing on the Rezoning at 8:25 p.m. No one came forward. Chair Parsons closed the public hearing at 8:26 p.m.

Commissioner Becker motioned to recommend approval of the Rezoning. Seconded by Commissioner Hayes, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Chair Parsons opened the public hearing on the Preliminary Plat at 8:29 p.m. No one came forward. Chair Parsons closed the public hearing at 8:30 p.m.
Troy Livgard, of James R. Hill, principal engineer with Dynamic's Land Design Co., stated, blocks 15, 17, 18 are meant to have future road connections to the south when other phases of the development are approved.

Commissioners were uncomfortable of the design of the road connections and wanted blocks 15, 17, 18 shown as part of Outlot F instead. They also wanted no fencing on top of the proposed landscaped berms along the collector street. They also asked the developer to return to the Park Advisory Committee on April 11, 2005 to get further information about the intent of the second park idea.

Chair Parsons motioned to recommend approval of the Preliminary Plat with the below modifications:

- The requirements of both the staff report (March 22, 2005) and the Engineer's requirements (March 7 & 24, 2005) be included.
- Add Parking Lot design specifications (for the park).
- Delete #3 (Street "K" extension) from the staff report.
- Expand Outlot F to include blocks 15, 16, 18 and 7-12 lots of block 17.
- No fencing shall be placed on berms.
- Identify Trail connections within 20 foot outlots.
- Park Advisory Committee clarification on Park Land Dedication.

Seconded by Commissioner Langsdorf, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Chair Parsons called a five-minute intermission at 9:07p.m.

7C. PUBLIC HEARING: Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Rezoning & Preliminary Plat for "Prairie Meadows Third Addition"

Mr. Brixius presented the staff report regarding a 60 lot, single-family home, development called Prairie Meadows Third Addition. He stated the developer is asking to "down-zone" the outlot from high density residential to medium density. The character of the neighborhood would have single family homes on smaller lots that averaged 80% smaller than the R-2 (Medium density residential) standard. Thus, the developer is asking for a Planned Unit Development in order to be given flexibility from City standards. They are proposing an association that governs architecture design but with ground maintenance (sanitary and yard grooming responsibility would be left to the home owner). Mr. Brixius stated City staff believes although the decreased density is a positive, the request is too generous and does not provide enough evidence for better architectural features than normal single family development. Thus, staff feels concerned the proposed neighborhood might not be re-invested in come ten years from now.

Developer, Mark Gergen of Miles Development Corporation, 18004 Jacquard Path Lakeville, MN 55044 addressed the commission and stated he would prefer to go with a R-2 or medium density development but could still pursue townhomes as the City originally zoned the outlot for. He said they took City Council suggestions at the Concept Plan level to reduce the 64 proposed lots down to 60 and on each lot there is ample room for future additions and decks. He stated the overall density of the site is 4.9 units per acre and is actually below the R-2 district standard of 5 to 9 units per acre. Thus, the reduced density is a positive to reduce traffic and the number of people in the neighbor. He clarified that garage sizes will meet he City's ordinance and would not be opposed to side loading garages. Driveway will be designed thoughtfully and sidewalks will be provided on one side of the streets. He thought the landscaping provision for screening along the east property line is better than what the City requires and this should be an argument for the Planned Unit Development. He mentioned at this time builder has not be selected so they don't have definitive home styles and architectural designs. The renderings provide a glimpse of what the house might look like. Once they have approval of the single-family proposal they will then solicit for builders. Mr. Gergen believes the proposed association provides for some control but also gives homeowners independence to be creative with their own landscaping. In short, he believes their proposal to be economically viable and will be an attractive neighborhood when fully built.

Chair Parsons opened the public hearing on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan Amendment at 9:45 p.m.

Mal Landehr, 20114 170th, Big Lake was concerned about the density and value of his own property. He suggested a strong association for good up-keep of homes and properties.

Master Developer of Prairie Meadows, Greg Schlink of Bruggeman Homes, 3564 Rollingview Drive, White Bear Lake, MN 55110 stated amenities such as parks were addressed within the overall master plan for Prairie Meadows. Furthermore, he stated the original Comprehensive Plan called for high density residential on 205th Street and the Council decided the use would be a better fit down near 172nd Street and the Govesco property. Lastly, he stated Bruggeman Homes supports the Miles development project and thinks it will be successful.

Dan Deuel, also a resident of 170th, Big Lake believes the development will be a mess in 5 years without a strong association. He advocated twin homes instead of detached single family units on small lots.

Paula Belford, another resident of 170th, Big Lake thought the density is too great and wanted larger platted lots.

Mr. Gergen stated they will be providing good visual screening from the transition between large lots and their smaller lots. He presented the Cross-section of the proposed retaining wall with pine trees atop.

Chair Parsons closed the public hearing at 9:58 p.m.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for a fence along the eastern property line.

Mr. Gergen stated they could do a fence but felt the landscaping would be more visual pleasing.

Lynn Giovanelli, with Miles Development, asked for clarification on what people meant by a stronger association.

Commissioners felt like the developer was asking for a lot of flexibility from the R-2 standards. A consensus of the commissioner was taken.

Commissioner Marotz has concerns over the smaller lots and felt comfortable with 60' minimum widths. Commissioner Hayes wanted to see better architectural features higher price points and gave an allowance of 10 foot house side setback back and 5 foot garage side setbacks. Commissioners Langsdorf wanted to see the developer to revise the plat to have lots in the middle of what they proposed and what the R-2 district calls for. Chair Parsons concurred and wanted a stronger association. Commissioner Benecke wanted the lots closer to R-2 standard and at minimum of a 30 foot front yard setback. Commissioner Becker was comfortable with a 60 foot width for the lots and no association because it is a single family neighborhood. Commissioner Schreiber wanted the developer to come up with a compromise as well.

Commissioner Hayes motioned to table the applications for Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Rezoning and Preliminary Plat. Seconded by Commissioner Benecke, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Item will be heard again at the April 20, 2005 Planning Commission Meeting.

8. PLANNER'S REPORT

Alan Brixius of Northwest Associates introduced the new consultant planner for Big Lake, Nate Sparks. He also stated staff has been working on the Exterritorial Land Use Plan and wants to hold a Workshop soon to gather the commissioner's feedback.

Jim Thares addressed the commissioners about a RFR (Request For Proposal) submitted by Doug Urhammer concerning the viability of the City's R-5 or Residential Redevelopment District. He asked the commissioners to take a look at the Request and

give staff feedback at the next meeting.

9. COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

None.

10. ADJOURN

Chair Parsons motioned to adjourn at 10:56p.m.